Talcing over the Tiruvannamalai Temple by ASI

2765. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ASI has decided to takeover the ancient Tiruvannamalai Temple in Tamil Nadu under its control;

(b) what are the prescribed norms to takeover ancient monuments under ASI;

(c) whether Government are aware of the opposition of the entire population of Tamil Nadu to this takeover by ASI; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (d) The Central Government while expressing its intention to declare the Arunachaleshwarar temple in Tiruvannamalai as as of national importance under the provisions of Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 has notified the same in the Official Gazette of India *vide* S.O. No. 1024(E) dated 21.9.2002.

The Central Government under the provisions of Section 4 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 by notification in the Official Gazette of India give two months notice of its intention to declare ancient monument as defined in Section 2 of the Act; any structure erection or monument, or any tumulus or place of interment, or any cave, rock sculpture, inscription or monolith, which is of historical, archaeological or artistic interest and which has been in existence for not less than one hundred years to be of national importance. Copy of such notification is affixed in a conspicuous place near the monument on the site and remains.

Any person interested in such ancient monument or site and remains may within two months after the issue of the notification, object to the declaration of the monument to be of national importance.

On expiry of two months, the Central Government after considering the objection if any, received by it, declare by notification

in the Official Gazette, the said monument/site or remains to be of national importance.

The Special Commissioner, Hindu Religious & Charitable Endowments Department, Municipal Commissioner, Tiruvannamalai and two more individuals have filed petition in the High Court of Madras with the prayer to grant stay in declaration of Arunachaleshwarar temle in Tiruvannamalai as of national importance. SLP (Civil) No. 12443—12447 of 2001 with 13143—13147 of 2001 between Commissioner, Thiruvannamalai Municipality v/s Arunachala Giri Prakakshana Samiti & others is pending before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India wherein the Archaeological Survey of India has been made a party. The Central Government have filed a transfer petition in the Supreme Court of India for the transfer of all the four Writ Petition No. 41227, 40989, 41142 and 40935 pending before the High Court of Judicature at madras so that all the cases of similar nature are dealt in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The matter is now pending before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and the issue as on date is subjudice.

Financial assistance for historical places and ancient temples in Tamil Nadu

2766. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam and Tiruchirapalli District in Tamil Nadu are famous for historical places and ancient temples which attract tourists from all over the world;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to release financial assistance to provide facilities in those places up to the International standards;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.